

Meeting Needs of Motorists with Innovation Since 1917

The Dealers and Repairers Division of the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is responsible for licensing motor vehicle dealers and repairers in the State of Connecticut. This division has the authority to ensure that licensed dealers and repairers operate in accordance with the laws and regulations relating to the conduct of their business. If you as a consumer feel you have been unfairly treated by a dealer or repairer, you may file a complaint with the Dealers and Repairers Division. Complaints are utilized by the DMV in the investigation of its licensees. You will be contacted by the DMV if the licensee named in your complaint is investigated. Complaints against licensees who are not investigated remain in file for possible future reference.

Private Sales and Repairs

Private Sales and Repairs (i.e., sales and repairs not involving a licensed motor vehicle dealer or repairer) fall outside the jurisdiction of the Dealers and Repairers Division. Any problem you may have with another private individual is a civil matter, and we cannot provide legal advice in such matters. If the money involved does not exceed \$3,500, you should consider Small Claims Court. It is not necessary to enlist the services of an attorney since every aspect of the small claims session has been designed to permit a person to handle his or her own case from start to finish. Contact your nearest municipal court for information on how to bring a small claims action. If the money involved exceeds \$3,500, your case would be handled in the regular civil docket, and you should consult with an attorney.

If you have a complaint against a business, which is not required to have a dealer or repairer license (i.e., an upholstery shop, a tire shop, etc.) you should contact:

Department of Consumer Protection
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106
Telephone: 1-800-842-2649
<http://www.ct.gov/dep/site/>

Filing a Complaint

In order to file a complaint against a dealer or repairer, you must fill out the Complaint against Motor Vehicles Sales or Service Business Firm (form K-35), which can be obtained in person at any DMV branch office or can be sent to you at your request (1-800-842-8222).

Note: Please see back of brochure for DMV office locations.

It is very important that you follow the directions on the K-35 form. Please include all telephone information, especially the number where you can be reached weekdays between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. It is essential that you include copies of all papers related to your complaint (i.e., warranty, invoice, repair bill, etc.). You should keep the original paperwork.

Please be sure you have contacted the dealership or repair shop regarding your dissatisfaction before filing a complaint with the DMV. They must be given an opportunity to resolve the problem.

Towing and Storage

The two most common complaints customers have associated with vehicle towing and storage is being overcharged and finding damage to the vehicle as a result from towing.

The state regulates the amount you may be charged for a nonconsensual tow. Nonconsensual tow charges are based on distance and vehicle weight. A nonconsensual tow means the towing of a motor vehicle from private property, (trespass tow) or for which arrangements are made by order of a law enforcement officer or traffic authority.

According to the Connecticut State Law, storage costs can be charged on the vehicle beginning eight hours after the towing is completed. All towing businesses must post storage charges.

If your vehicle has been damaged as a result of improper towing by a licensed towing business and you have been unable to reach agreement with the towing business, we may be able to help you. *You must provide some proof (e.g., a police report) that the damage to your vehicle was the direct result of negligent towing.*

Vehicle Sales

According to Connecticut State Law Title 14 Sec. 14-62, each sale of a motor vehicle requires a properly prepared and signed invoice, a copy of which shall be provided to the purchaser. Dealers are required to indicate the conditions for refund of deposits on the invoice. Three conditions are possible: no refund of deposit, conditional refund of deposit, or unconditional refund of deposit. The DMV cannot require a dealer to refund your deposit if your signed invoice states that you are not entitled to a refund.

Used vehicles: A federal used car buyers guide must be posted in the left rear window of a used vehicle when it is displayed for sale. If the vehicle is not specifically guaranteed, the dealer is still responsible for all items on the vehicle necessary for its legal operation on the roads of Connecticut. If the vehicle does not meet the requirements for legal operation at the time of sale, it can only be sold legally if the transfer documents state that the vehicle is unsafe to operate on the road. An 'as is' sale does not exempt the dealer from responsibility for items necessary for legal operation.

A law as of October 1, 1997, requires that your used vehicle be mechanically operational and sound throughout a warranty period, if you paid at least \$3,000 to a licensed dealer and the vehicle is 6 years old or less. Please refer to the separate flyer, 'Connecticut's Used Car Warranty Law.'

New vehicles: Most new vehicles are covered by a factory (i.e., manufacturer's) warranty. If the same defect persists with your new car after repeated repair attempts, the problem with your new car may be classified as a 'manufacturer's defect.' The problem then falls under the Connecticut 'Lemon Law' and you should direct your complaint to:

Department of Consumer Protection
Automobile Dispute Settlement Program
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106
Telephone: 1-800-538-CARS
<http://www.ct.gov/dep/site/>

If you have a question concerning vehicle recalls, you should contact:

National Highway Traffic Safety Admin.
400 Seventh Avenue S.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20590
Telephone: 1-800-424-9393
<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/>

Repairs

Authorization and Estimate: Connecticut law requires that a repairer obtain your oral or written authorization on any repair. If repairs exceed \$50, an estimate of the maximum cost to the customer must be given. If you feel that the estimate to repair your vehicle is too high do not authorize the repair.

Improper Repairs: If you have a complaint about a repair job (i.e., the repairer fixed the vehicle incorrectly, the repairer failed to correct the stated problem, the repairer caused further damage to vehicle) it is important, in most cases, that we see the original part in order to determine its condition. A statement from another dealer or repairer as to the problem may also be required.

The repairer must provide you with the replaced part if you request it before or at the time the vehicle is returned to you. You have the right to see rebuilt or remanufactured parts (parts that the repairer normally returns to the manufacturer) and you may be able to purchase the replaced parts by paying a 'core' charge. Such a purchase is at the repairer's option.

Receipts: Be sure to get an itemized receipt every time you have a repair made, whether the repair is under the warranty or not. These receipts will serve as proof that attempts were made to repair the vehicle during the warranty period. Such proof can be especially important if your complaint is found to be covered by the Lemon Law.

If you were given an estimate and you agreed to it, there is no DMV violation, unless the garage exceeds the original authorized estimate.

DMV Office Locations

Bridgeport, Danbury, Enfield, Hamden, New Britain, Norwalk, Norwich, Old Saybrook, Putnam, Stamford, Waterbury, Wethersfield, Willimantic and Winsted

Branch Office Hours

Tues., Wed., Fri.: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Thursdays: 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Saturdays: 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Winsted Office Hours

Tuesdays: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Thursdays: 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Saturdays: 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Putnam Office Hours

Tuesdays: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Thursdays: 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Saturdays: 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Stamford Office Hours

Tues., Wed., Fri.: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

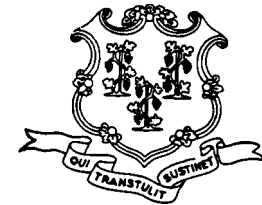
Willimantic Office Hours

Tuesdays: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Thursdays: 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Saturdays: 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

The Dealers and Repairers offices are located in Room 102 of the Wethersfield office and are open Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

For general information in the Greater Hartford area, call 860-263-5700. Outside the Greater Hartford area call toll free: 1-800-842-8222

Know Your Rights



Filing a Complaint with DMV Dealers and Repairers Division

M. Jodi Rell

Governor

Ralph J. Carpenter

Commissioner

State of Connecticut
Department of Motor Vehicles
60 State Street
Wethersfield, CT 06161
ct.gov/dmv